



February 27, 2019

Submitted via email to: instestimony@cga.ct.gov

Insurance and Real Estate Committee
Connecticut House of Representatives
Legislative Office Building, Room 2800
Hartford, CT 06106

**Re: Statement of ViiV Healthcare on Raised Bill H.B. 7174 – AN ACT CONCERNING
PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

Senator Lesser, Representative Scanlon and members of the Insurance Committee, ViiV Healthcare (ViiV) is submitting testimony in opposition to Raised Bill HB 7114 – *An Act Concerning Prescription Drugs*.

ViiV was established in 2009 through a unique collaboration between GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and Pfizer and later added Shionogi in 2012. ViiV is the only independent, global specialist company devoted exclusively to delivering advancements in HIV treatment and prevention to support the needs of people living with HIV (PLWH). From its inception in 2009, ViiV has had a singular focus to improve the health and quality of people affected by HIV and has worked to address significant gaps and unmet needs in HIV care.

HB 7174 would create the Connecticut Prescription Drug Program and allow the state's comptroller to set reimbursement rates and establish prices for outpatient prescription drugs in the program. While we support the bill's aim to address rising health care costs, price controls are not the answer. The United States leads the world in the discovery and development of lifesaving medicines. However, price controls prevent market forces from driving down drug prices. Further, price controls deter pharmaceutical innovation by preventing manufacturers from recouping research costs and re-investing these funds into tomorrow's treatments and cures.

ViiV is proud to have its U.S. research and development facility in Bransford, Connecticut's bioscience corridor. Our facility enables us to discover new cutting-edge treatments to address the unmet needs of PLWH. ViiV has a strong legacy of discovering HIV treatments that enable PLWH to manage HIV as a chronic disease instead of a death sentence. ViiV has built upon GSK's legacy of creating azidothymidine (AZT), the first antiretroviral therapy (ART), in 1987 to achieving major advances in HIV treatment so that HIV may now be managed as a chronic disease. Thanks to these advancements, the scientific community has been able to focus on improving treatment regimens and care for PLWH, helping to reduce pill size and the number of pills required to a single, once-daily, fixed-dose tablet combining multiple drugs that suppress the virus. Moreover, ViiV is working to launch three new products by the first half of 2020: the first two-drug regimen for treatment naïve patients, an option for highly treatment-experienced patients, and the first long-acting injectable – all novel and which meet unmet medical and patient needs. We will continue to investigate alternative administration methods in response to community and patient requests as we work together to end the epidemic. Our facility in Branford helps realize these lifesaving advancements in HIV treatment.

In addition to deterring scientific innovation, HB 7174 penalizes drug manufacturers – like ViiV – who price their products in a responsible manner using a value-based approach. With our 100 percent focus on HIV, ViiV balances our research responsibilities with our goal to make medications affordable and available. That goes for everything we do – from research and development of new treatments, to improving access to our medicines – so that no person living with, or no person at risk for HIV, is left behind.



ViiV systematically applies a value-based framework that balances the value of scientific innovation delivered to patients living with HIV with access, affordability, and the investment necessary to bring new medicines to market. For example, the three drugs ViiV has launched since 2013, which have been included in the *DHHS Guidelines on the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in Adults and Adolescents*, have been priced below other drugs in the same class. Furthermore, 75-80 percent of PLWH pay \$10 or less for an HIV medication researched and developed by ViiV. Pharmaceutical manufacturers also subsidize government health care programs, including Medicaid, Medicare, and the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, through rebates or discounts to make our products more affordable both to government and our patients. In fact, pharmaceutical companies provided an estimated \$356 million in 2016 and 2017 to the Ryan White Part B Program and an estimated \$1.5 billion to the Ryan White AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) in 2016 and 2017 through rebates.¹ This includes

ViiV is extremely proud to be the highest-ranked company in the PatientView *Corporate Reputation of Pharma – from the Perspective of Patient Groups* report for the fourth year running. This recognition is testament to ViiV Healthcare's strong focus and commitment to people living with HIV and the way we work in partnership with patient groups to play our part in responding to the HIV epidemic. ViiV strives to provide an equal standard of care for all patients. If a patient doesn't have insurance and is having trouble paying for the ViiV Healthcare medicine(s) prescribed, the patient may qualify for our Patient Assistance Program that offers our medicines at no cost to patients who qualify.² In 2018, ViiV donated more than \$88.1M in free HIV drugs to patients in need. ViiV also offers Patient Savings Card Programs for eligible patients with commercial insurance to help reduce patient out-of-pocket costs.

For these reasons, we respectfully oppose Raised Bill HB 7114 – *An Act Concerning Prescription Drugs*. We look forward to working with you and other policymakers in Connecticut to identify solutions to lower health care costs that do not hinder innovation or penalize manufacturers who are placing patients first.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carie Harter".

Carie Harter
Senior Director, Government Relations & Advocacy
ViiV Healthcare

¹ NASTAD, 2018 Annual Report: National Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Part B & ADAP Monitoring Project Annual Report, p.20. <https://www.nastad.org/sites/default/files/Uploads/2018/2018-national-rwhap-partb-adap-monitoring-project-annual-report.pdf>

² For more information, see ViiV Connect at https://www.vivconnect.com/financial-and-savings/?utm_source=bing&utm_medium=cpc&utm_term=viv%20patient%20assistance%20program&utm_campaign=BS%20-%20Branded%20-%20ViiV%20Connect%20EX